

Minutes of the Regional Planning Commission  
Tuesday, May 19, 2009, 4:00 p.m.  
Lake County Department of Transportation, Libertyville, IL

2.1

The Regional Planning Commission met with the following in attendance:

**Members Present:**

Marvin Raymond – Chair  
Charles J. Lucas – Vice Chair  
Craig Ellison  
Lawrence Falbe  
Paul Geiselhart  
~~William Holleman~~  
~~Donald Klein~~  
Marie Lyons  
Jordan Madorsky  
Lorraine Ray  
~~Bryan Rouse~~  
Terry L. Weppler  
Charles Willms

**Planning Staff:**

Megan Krueger  
Bill Hunt  
David Husemoller

**Ex-Officios:**

**Others:**

Mary Jane Lucas  
Mike Prusila

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER - meeting called to order at 4:01 p.m.**

**2.0 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**2.1 Motion:** Motion to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2009 Regional Planning Commission.  
**Made by:** Commissioner Ray  
**Seconded by:** Commissioner Geiselhart  
**Action:** Approved unanimously.

**3.0 ADDED TO AGENDA ITEMS - None**

**4.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS - None**

**5.0 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Chairman Raymond announced to the Commission that Megan Krueger has assumed the secretarial responsibilities for the Regional Planning Commission. Megan has taken the place of Ms. Terry Kuss, who will now be working with Sheel Yajnik in preparation for the move to the new Central Permit Facility.

Chairman Raymond went on to announce that Mr. Bill Hunt has taken the place of Mr. Dennis Sandquist as the Planning Division Head. Mr. Sandquist is now the Director of Planning for McHenry County.

Chairman Raymond welcomed the new staff.

Chairman Raymond went on to present plaques of appreciation to three of the Commission members. Commissioner Lucas was presented an award for twenty years of service;

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Commissioner Geiselhart was presented an award for ten years of service; and Commissioner Lyons was presented an award for five years of service. Congratulations were given for these milestones.

Chairman Raymond also congratulated Commissioner Weppeler on being elected Mayor of Libertyville.

### **6.0 PLAN REVIEWS AND HEARINGS - None**

### **7.0 OLD BUSINESS - None**

### **8.0 NEW BUSINESS**

#### **8.1 Sustainable Farming and Local Food Production**

Chairman Raymond introduced Mr. David Husemoller, who went on to present the report on Sustainable Farming and Local Food Production.

Mr. Bill Hunt announced that Mr. Husemoller is a Senior Planner with the Lake County Planning, Building and Development Department, and is the author of this report. Mr. Husemoller is also the proprietor for Earth Wild Gardens, which is a source for native plants and flowers.

Mr. Husemoller stated that this report was presented to the Planning, Building and Zoning Committee on May 5, 2009, at which time the Committee approved the presentation of the Sustainable Farming and Local Food Production report to the Regional Planning Commission for further study and direction. The PB&Z Committee requested a follow-up report with the RPC's recommendations in approximately three months.

Mr. Husemoller explained to the Commissioners that food consumed by the residents of Lake County typically travels an average of 1,500 miles from its origin, and that 90% of the County's food sources are grown and processed out of state. Increasing food production in the state would produce revenue for the State of Illinois.

Mr. Husemoller went on to say that there are many benefits of locally grown food products such as producing jobs in a local "Green Economy", increasing profitability of agricultural land, and receiving Federal and State grant funding.

Commissioner Madorsky asked Mr. Husemoller if his business is profitable.

Mr. Husemoller stated that he has made a profit with his secondary business, and would like to expand it further.

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Environmental benefits of local food production include reducing the carbon footprint due to the extensive transport of food and cleaner water and air within the region. Public health is also increased with the availability of fresh, healthy foods, and locally grown foods allow for food reserves and alternative sources with regard to emergency preparedness.

Mr. Husemoller also reported that the current trend in land use demonstrates that 8,500 acres of agricultural land have been converted to other uses, yet there has been an increase in the number of specialty farms in the County between 2000 and 2005. Also, in 2008 a U.S. Farm Bill was passed promoting \$1.3 billion in new funding over 10 years to support specialty crops through the promotion of farmers' markets and community food projects and farm to institution programs.

The Illinois Food, Farms and Jobs Acts of 2007 and 2009 promote connecting the people and the land, and creating jobs and revitalizing rural, suburban, and urban communities by enabling Illinois farmers to produce what the residents of Illinois purchase. Newly proposed legislation also creates a statewide "Local Food Council".

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) will issue a report in June of this year explaining small scale agriculture for meeting the needs of the local food system. The approach to meet these goals include: community gardens, farmers' markets, and urban farms and organic farming methods. Land use and transportation planning will be incorporated, into the report along with section on educational programs and a strategy for food security.

Recent developments regarding sustainable agriculture within Lake County include the passage of the Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability Goals by the County Board in April 2009, and the creation of a task force in 2001 to develop the concept of a working farm, as requested by the Planning, Building and Zoning Committee. The Lake County Heritage Farm Foundation has now become a free-standing non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Finally, as written in the Lake County Regional Framework Plan; Policy 4.8.1 is to "promote new and expanded farming activities, including ... businesses that provide fruits and vegetables ... directly to consumers."

Mr. Husemoller stated that based on the recent trends, staff has outlined the recommendations for the Sustainable Farming and Local Food Production report as requested by the PB&Z Committee. They are as follows: Coordinate policies from CMAP and from State and Federal agencies; evaluate land use, regulatory and economic tools to reduce food production barriers; study opportunities for consumers with regard to nutrition and health benefits and possible connections with local food banks; promote and increase in the availability of farmers' markets community gardens; and, study opportunities for producers and distributors to include financing and business development, sustainable farming practices and farm-to-institution programs.

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Possible actions and/or direction from the RPC would be to form a subcommittee to further define the concept of a food council. A subcommittee could provide the opportunity to study possible membership and invite speakers to expand on this issue. Other actions would be to evaluate the findings in the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning report, and to then pass on the recommendations to the PB&Z Committee.

Commissioner Ray stated that she would prefer that the entire RPC work on the task, rather than appoint a subcommittee.

Commissioner Geiselhart stated that he liked the idea of forming a subcommittee to further study this initiative. He stated that it is an important issue, and he would like to hear from other speakers that have knowledge on the topic. He also stated that he does not believe that many of the children in the County know the source of their food, and there is much that the Commission can do to promote these issues.

Chairman Raymond explained that top producer of honey is Newport Township within Lake County. The Illinois Department of Taxation has classified bee keeping as an agricultural activity, and allows an agricultural exemption for this use. Many farmers are beginning to keep bees as a side business to assist with the cost of maintaining their land. There are also many grants available to farmers interested in adding this use to their farms. It goes without saying that if there were no bees, there would be no agriculture because the bees help with pollenization.

Commissioner Lyons explained that she attended the American Planning Association Annual Conference where she learned about the Kane County Partners in Farmland Protection plan. From this seminar she learned of the farm to table connection and she agreed that it is important to make the public understand from where the food is shipped. She also explained that in Colorado and California they are already beginning to operate under plans to promote sustainability; in San Francisco the target is to make the city completely self sustaining within the next forty years. She added that she would be interested in demonstrations on how to promote sustainability in Lake County.

Motion: Motion to follow the request of the Planning, Building and Zoning Committee and further define and study the concept of a Food Council with the Regional Planning Commission as a whole rather than to form a subcommittee to accept the task.  
Made by: Commissioner Ray  
Seconded by: Commissioner Geiselhart  
Action: Unanimously approved.

Commissioner Madorsky requested that PB&D staff provide further goals and direction to the Commission to promote this initiative.

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Commissioner Ellison asked how many meetings would be necessary to formulate the requested report by the end of July 2009.

Mr. Husemoller stated that an initial report would be provided by the end of July; the initiative may continue past this time.

Commissioner Weppler asked if there was an established set of standards for a farmer's market.

Mr. Husemoller stated that he believed the true standards of a farmers' market it to be food and fiber based; limited to farm grown food products and fibers such as wool. There are however, many venues that offer more than the "market standards" and incorporate crafts and other displays with their sales.

*Commissioner Ray exited the meeting at 4:55 p.m.*

**8.2 Updated Information for the Lake County Caliper Report**

Mr. David Husemoller explained that the information in the Caliper Report has been updated with figures for 2009. The Caliper Reports were collected from the Commissioners, and new reports will be provided at the next meeting.

**8.3 Updated Contact Information for Planning Staff and Board Members**

Chairman Raymond explained that Ms. Krueger provided a packet of updated contact information for PB&D staff and County Board members. There was also a listing of RPC meeting dates for 2009 and 2010, and a list of appointments for Commission members. This information will replace the contacts section in the RPC binders.

Chairman Raymond requested that the personal contact information not be provided to the general public.

**8.4 Upcoming Planning Conferences**

Mr. Bill Hunt reviewed the information provided to the Commission members regarding the upcoming conferences. The Commissioners are welcome to attend these meetings if interested.

Commissioner Geiselhart asked if there would be scholarships available for individuals interested in attending the Randall Arendt conference.

Mr. Hunt stated that he is not aware of scholarships available for conference attendance, but that the fees for RPC members would be covered by the County.

**9.0 OTHER BUSINESS**

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**9.1 Chairman's Report – None**

**9.2 Commissioners' Comments**

Commissioner Weppler asked for a status report on the aquifer mapping project within the region.

Mr. Hunt stated that the report was originally scheduled for completion in June of this year but the project has fallen behind slightly due to budgetary issues. The report should be ready for review in November of this year.

Commissioner Weppler stated that he has just learned that the state plans to widen Route 21 from Route 137 to Route 120. The project is scheduled to begin soon, but will not be completed until 2012.

**9.3 Director's Report**

Mr. Bill Hunt explained that the new Central Permit Facility is currently under construction just to the north of the current meeting location. He urged the Commission members to drive by the construction site at their convenience to view the progress.

The County has mailed notifications to the municipalities and townships regarding the County's Brownfield Program. The program offers a fifty-fifty grant match up to \$100,000. The deadline for application is June 12, 2009.

The County is organizing a task force of consultants and municipal representatives to draft ordinances regarding wind energy. David Husemoller will also be leading this new initiative.

The PB&D Department is working on a vacant right-of-way analysis for the County. The County is developing a comprehensive policy that would address what happens when a property owner on an undeveloped segment of right-of-way wishes to construct a house. This situation occurs in several subdivisions, specifically in the northwest sector of the County, platted between 1890 and 1930 where there were roads shown on the plat but never developed. The current County policy states that a public road with more than three lots requires that the road be paved to meet County standards; this requirement can be very expensive. At this time the department is trying to identify situations that meet this criteria, after which, the information will be reported back to the PB&Z Committee and to the County Board. Staff will include recommendations on how to approach these situations when these types of applications are received in the future.

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Commissioner Weppler urged Mr. Bill Hunt, as a representative of the County, to remain cautious when producing County ordinances regarding wind generators. As the new mayor for Libertyville he has been initiated into the process quickly. The neighbors in the vicinity of the new wind tower in the municipality are not happy with the installation. Commissioner Weppler went on to say that one of the concerns with the new installation is "flicker shadowing". There are also problems with the constant noise of the blades moving through the air, and with ice forming on, and being thrown from the blades during the winter. Finally, he noted that he supports the wind energy initiative in the proper location, but not in a residential area.


Commissioner Geiselhart asked if the County currently has ordinances regarding the maintenance of foreclosed commercial properties within the County. He is concerned about maintenance on these vacant properties and issues that face these parcels without proper maintenance.

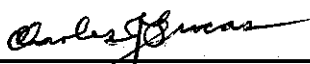
Commissioner Weppler explained that this is a problem throughout the County, but in most instances it is difficult to recoup the funds from the bank to maintain the properties.


**9.4 Ex-Officio Reports - None**

**10.0 ADJOURNMENT**


Motion: To adjourn the May 19, 2009, RPC Meeting at 5:29 p.m.  
Made by: Commissioner Madorsky  
Seconded by: Commissioner Lyons  
Action: Approved unanimously

  
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Regional Planning Commission - Chair  
Marvin J. Raymond


  
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Vice-Chair - Charles J. Lucas

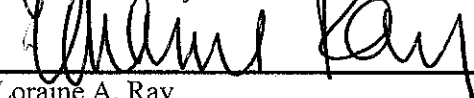
  
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Craig Ellison

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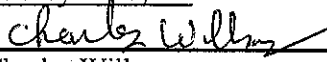
  
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Terry L. Weppler

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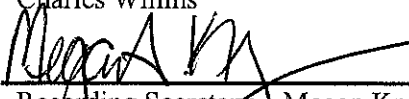
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Recording Secretary - Megan Krueger